

- Fig. 11. *Cancellaria exigua*, p. 439.
 12. *Mitra miranda*, p. 440.
 13. *Marginella carinata*, p. 440.
 14. — *brazieri*, p. 440.

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- Fig. 15. *Scalaria distincta*, p. 441.
 16. *Ostomia (Turbonilla) fischeri*, p. 441.
 17. — (—) *consanguinea*, p. 441.
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5. On the present Distribution of the Giraffe, South of the Zambesi, and on the best means of securing living Specimens for European Collections. By H. A. BRYDEN.

[Received June 15, 1891.]

Large game animals are disappearing so rapidly from Southern Africa that each year now sees the ancient limits of occurrence more and more circumscribed.

Guns are now plentiful among native tribes, right away to the Zambesi, and, with the rapid advent of Europeans and European money into once remote territories, horses, on which depends the successful chase of many of the fauna, are now more readily procured.

In twenty years' time it may be safely said there will be very few Giraffes left, even in the inaccessible deserts where they yet seclude themselves. With the practical disappearance of the Rhinoceros from South Africa, and the approaching extinction of the Hippopotamus, the thick-skinned Giraffe is now much more sought after as a means of supplying the universally used sjambok or colonial whip. The hide of a good bull Giraffe is worth now from £4 to £5 for this purpose, that of a cow a little less. Small wonder then that native and Dutch hunters alike have been extremely active of late years in hunting this interesting, beautiful, and defenceless creature.

At the present day the head-quarters of the Giraffe may be said to be in the parched desert country comprising the North Kalahari.

A few years since they were to be found at no great distance from Khama's old capital, Shoshong; now they are first encountered in the bush and forest-region beyond Kanne, or Klaballa, on the way from Shoshong to Lake Ngami. This waterless tract, well called thirst-land, serves them as a safe retreat. From Kanne to the Botletli River, and thence halfway to the lake, Khama reserves

them for his own and his people's hunting, and Dutch hunters, with their wasteful methods, are not permitted—a very wise precaution.

In most of Khama's country stretching north to the Victoria Falls, and west to the Chobe and Mababé Rivers and beyond, Giraffes may yet be found, as well as in Moremi's country, in the region of Lake Ngami.

Probably the pick of the Giraffe-country now left to South Africa is the desolate and quite waterless forest-region lying south of the Botletli River, and thence extending southward some way into the Kalahari.

For eight months of the year most of this "veldt" is quite waterless and cannot be hunted, unless water-carts could be taken in; here very large troops of the Giraffe roam free and undisturbed.

I have been told by reliable witnesses of 70 or 80 being seen together at one time in quite recent years. I myself, when hunting along the Botletli last year, within a day's ride of the river, met with a troop of nineteen, and smaller troops were also seen.

Khama's hunters make an annual excursion to this "veldt," and the average bag of each hunting outfit seems to be from 12 to 16 or 20 Giraffes. These are shot solely for the marketable value of their skins. All the natives in this part of Africa use the hide of the Giraffe for making their sandals.

From the Botletli Giraffes are found some way south into the Kalahari. Last year a troop or two must have wandered much farther down than usual, as, when near Honing Vley, in British Bechuanaland, I heard of Bareeki's hunters suddenly flocking into the Central Kalahari, Giraffes having penetrated nearly as far south as the Molopo River; this, however, is very unusual now-a-days. Westward of Tunobis (Galton's farthest point in 1850) towards Damaraland, Giraffes are not now found, the Namaqua hunters being too active in this region; but in parts of Ovampoland, towards the Okavango River, they are, I am informed, yet found in fair numbers. More to the eastward, on the south bank of the Chobe, they are also numerous.

Mr. Selous tells us that in parts of the Matabele country the Giraffe was common ten years since, and it is still to be found there, albeit in decreasing numbers. In Mashunaland proper it is scarce, and east of the Gwelo River, according to the same great hunter, it scarcely ever wanders. This is a rather singular fact, one of the often incomprehensible facts of geographical distribution.

Until a few years back Giraffes were to be found in the low country between the north-east border of the Transvaal and the sea; Boer hunters have, however, so persecuted the game in this region that very few can now be left. In the Transvaal itself I doubt if a single Giraffe is now to be found, even in the remote north-east district near the Limpopo River.

So far as one may judge the Camelopard will linger the longest in the inaccessible and waterless forests south of the Botletli River. This animal is very singularly independent of water; the Bushmen and others will tell you that it does not drink. This I do not believe,

but it is certain that for seven or eight months of the year the Giraffes of the North Kalahari and other waterless regions can never touch water.

As to procuring living specimens :—

The Chief Khama of Bamangwato is (I speak from personal experience) so enlightened, so obliging, and so disposed to assist Europeans, and especially English people, in every possible way, that I am quite certain arrangements might be made with him for obtaining living specimens of the young of the Giraffe. Much of Khama's territory is the stronghold of this rare and singular creature, and in all his country the chief has implicit obedience from his vassals and tributaries. The Masarwa Bushmen of the North Kalahari and Botletli River regions, assisted by Khama's own mounted hunters, could spoor and catch the young of Giraffe, which could then be brought to Khama's town of Palachwe. From Palachwe to Vryburg, British Bechuanaland (420 miles), is but 20 days' journey, even by the slow-moving ox-waggon. From Vryburg to Cape Town the journey now occupies by rail two days and nights only. I know of no other part of Africa more accessible for the purpose I speak of, certainly no other where the willing services of an all-powerful chief such as Khama could be enlisted. In North Africa Giraffes have now very far to be sought, farther, I should say, even than in Khama's country. In East Africa the co-operation of native chiefs and hunters would be very hard to secure.

After Khama's time, the Giraffe, which he now to some extent preserves, will shortly be exterminated, and it will then be too late. I urge therefore upon all European collectors not to let slip the opportunity I have indicated.

6. Notes on some Reptiles from Trinidad.

By R. R. MOLE and F. W. URICH¹.

[Received May 29, 1891.]

1. THE TREE-BOA (*Xiphosoma hortulanum*).

This Snake is comparatively common in Trinidad, principally in the locality of streams. Locally it is known as the "Cascabel Dormillon," which means "sleeping Rattlesnake." It is invariably found in the daytime rolled up in loose folds among the twigs of a tree the branches of which overhang a stream. When disturbed it does not, as a rule, try to escape, but launches out at the aggressor with widely distended jaws. At night these Snakes are lively and glide from bough to bough in search of small birds, squirrels, and porcupine-rats, which constitute their principal food.

The female of a pair of these Cascabels, caught by Mr. G. R.

¹ Received from Messrs. Mole and Urich along with living specimens of the Reptiles noticed. The scientific names have been kindly determined by Mr. G. A. Boulenger.—P. L. S.